

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

021314Z Aug 01

CONFIDENTIAL PTQ6716

PAGE 01 HARARE 02322 01 OF 03 021703Z
ACTION AF-00

INFO	LOG-00	CIAE-00	DODE-00	SRPP-00	EUR-00	VC-00	H-01
	TEDE-00	INR-00	L-00	AC-01	NSAE-00	NSCE-00	OMB-01
	PA-00	PM-00	PRS-00	ACE-00	P-00	SP-00	SS-00
	TRSE-00	T-00	USIE-00	PMB-00	DRL-02	G-00	SAS-00
	/005W						

-----0D443B 021704Z /45

FM AMEMBASSY HARARE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9406
INFO NSC WASHDC PRIORITY
SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 HARARE 002322

SIPDIS

NSC FOR SENIOR AFRICA DIRECTOR JENDAYI FRAZER
LONDON FOR GURNEY
PARIS FOR BISA WILLIAMS
NAIROBI FOR PFLAUMER

E.O. 12958: DECL. 08/01/11
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [PINR](#) [MOPS](#) [ZI](#)
SUBJECT: OPPOSITION LEADER TSVANGIRAI ON UPCOMING PRESIDENTIAL
ELECTION

CLASSIFIED BY CHARGE D'AFFAIRES AUBREY HOOKS. REASONS: 1.5
(B) AND (D).

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 HARARE 02322 01 OF 03 021703Z

REF: HARARE 2239

SUMMARY

1. (C) IN A JULY 31 LUNCH HOSTED BY CHARGE HOOKS, MOVEMENT FOR
DEMOCRATIC CHANGE (MDC) MORGAN TSVANGIRAI SAID HE WAS PLEASED WITH
THE USG'S APPROACH TOWARD ZIMBABWE AND WITH HIS RECEPTION BY U.S.
OFFICIALS DURING HIS RECENT VISIT TO WASHINGTON. HE EXPECTS ZANU-
PF TO INTENSIFY THE VIOLENCE IN THE RUN-UP TO THE 2002
PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION, BUT INSISTS THE MDC WOULD NOT RESPOND IN
KIND. THE MDC PRESIDENT SAID HIS PARTY IS PREPARED TO PROVIDE
IMMUNITY TO PRESIDENT MUGABE IF HE STEPS DOWN, BUT MUGABE DOES NOT
TRUST THE MDC TO HONOR SUCH AN OFFER. TSVANGIRAI BELIEVES THE
PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION WILL TAKE PLACE BECAUSE MUGABE NEEDS THAT
STAMP OF LEGITIMACY. BASED ON EXTENSIVE CONSULTATIONS WITH
MILITARY OFFICERS, THE MDC LEADER IS CONVINCED THAT THE ARMED
FORCES WILL NOT INTERVENE TO KEEP MUGABE IN POWER SHOULD
TSVANGIRAI WIN THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION. TSVANGIRAI SAID THE

SIPDIS
UNITED STATES COULD BE MOST CONSTRUCTIVE BY REMAINING ENGAGED ON
ZIMBABWE, COORDINATING ITS APPROACH WITH KEY MEMBERS OF THE
INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY, AND BY PROVIDING ELECTION OBSERVERS AND
TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO THE ELECTORAL PROCESS. END SUMMARY.

2. (C) THE CHARGE HOSTED MOVEMENT FOR DEMOCRATIC CHANGE (MDC)
PRESIDENT MORGAN TSVANGIRAI FOR LUNCH AT HIS RESIDENCE ON JULY 31.
TSVANGIRAI WAS ACCOMPANIED BY MDC DEPUTY SECRETARY-GENERAL GIFT

SIPDIS
CHIMANIKIRE, WHILE THE CHARGE WAS JOINED BY THE DCM AND POLITICAL
SECTION CHIEF.

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 HARARE 02322 01 OF 03 021703Z
WASHINGTON VISIT

3. (C) ASKED FOR AN ASSESSMENT OF HIS RECENT VISIT TO WASHINGTON,
TSVANGIRAI SAID IT HAD BEEN "VERY PRODUCTIVE." DURING THE COURSE

SIPDIS
OF HIS MEETINGS WITH USG OFFICIALS -- INCLUDING DEPUTY SECRETARY
ARMITAGE, A/S KANSTEINER, AND USAID ADMINISTRATOR NATSIOS --
TSVANGIRAI HAD NOTED A CHANGE IN ATTITUDE TOWARD ZIMBABWE AND A

SIPDIS
BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF THE MDC AND WHAT IT STANDS FOR.
TSVANGIRAI PRAISED A/S KANSTEINER'S UNDERSTANDING OF THE SITUATION

SIPDIS

IN ZIMBABWE, PARTICULARLY OF THE POTENTIAL FOR BREAKDOWN HERE.

POLITICAL VIOLENCE

14. (C) THE CHARGE INQUIRED WHETHER TSVANGIRAI ANTICIPATED AN INCREASE IN VIOLENCE IN THE RUN-UP TO THE 2002 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION. THE MDC PRESIDENT REPLIED THAT HE HAS NO DOUBT THAT ZANU-PF WILL INTENSIFY ITS CAMPAIGN OF VIOLENCE AGAINST THE OPPOSITION AND ZIMBABWEAN VOTERS, AS THIS IS A KEY ELEMENT OF THEIR STRATEGY FOR WINNING AT ALL COSTS. THE JULY 28-29 BY-ELECTION IN BINDURA (SEPTTEL) HAD CONFIRMED THAT EXPECTATION, AS THE RULING PARTY HAD BUSED IN VOTERS FROM OUTSIDE THE CONSTITUENCY, ESTABLISHED BASE CAMPS USED BY WAR VETERANS AND PARTY THUGS TO INTIMIDATE VILLAGERS, AND ASSIGNED 200 YOUTHS TO EACH POLLING STATION TO INTIMIDATE VOTERS. ASKED WHETHER THE RULING PARTY COULD MOUNT SUCH AN EFFORT ON A NATIONAL SCALE, TSVANGIRAI SAID NO, AS THEY DID NOT HAVE THE RESOURCES OR

SIPDIS

MANPOWER. THE MDC, TSVANGIRAI REPORTED, IS CONSIDERING BOYCOTTING FUTURE BY-ELECTIONS UNLESS CERTAIN CONDITIONS ARE MET THAT WILL INCREASE THE PROSPECTS FOR A FREE AND FAIR ELECTION.

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 HARARE 02322 01 OF 03 021703Z

RECALLING THE ATTACK ON THE MDC PRESIDENT'S CONVOY IN BINDURA (REFTTEL), THE CHARGE ASKED WHETHER TSVANGIRAI FELT THREATENED. IF HIS CONVOY HAD INCLUDED ONLY A COUPLE OF CARS, TSVANGIRAI REPLIED, HE AND THE OTHER OCCUPANTS WOULD HAVE BEEN "PULVERIZED" AND HE MIGHT HAVE LOST HIS LIFE. THAT SAID, THE MDC WAS DOING EVERYTHING POSSIBLE TO MINIMIZE RISK BUT REALIZED THAT IT CANNOT ELIMINATE IT. HE WENT ON TO SAY THAT HE DID NOT FEEL THAT HIS LIFE WAS CONSTANTLY IN DANGER, DESCRIBING THE BINDURA INCIDENT AS A "ONE-OFF" ATTACK.

15. (C) THE CHARGE ASKED WHAT THE MDC'S STRATEGY IS FOR DEALING WITH ZANU-PF'S TACTICS. WE WILL NOT FIGHT VIOLENCE WITH VIOLENCE, TSVANGIRAI INSISTED. THE MDC'S STRATEGY HAS BEEN TO REDUCE ITS

SIPDIS

SUPPORTERS' EXPOSURE BY NOT HOLDING LARGE RALLIES IN HOTSPOTS AND BY QUIETLY EDUCATING PEOPLE ON THE GROUND TO REFRAIN FROM VIOLENCE AND TO DO WHATEVER IS NECESSARY TO PROTECT THEMSELVES, INCLUDING ATTENDING ZANU-PF RALLIES IF NECESSARY.

DISILLUSIONMENT WITH ZANU-PF

16. (C) IN THE TWENTY-ONE YEARS SINCE INDEPENDENCE, ZANU-PF HAS DOMINATED ELECTORAL POLITICS AND BEEN ABLE TO WIN ELECTIONS

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL PTQ6717

PAGE 01 HARARE 02322 02 OF 03 021704Z

ACTION AF-00

INFO	LOG-00	CIAE-00	DODE-00	SRPP-00	EUR-00	VC-00	H-01
	TEDE-00	INR-00	L-00	AC-01	NSAE-00	NSCE-00	OMB-01
	PA-00	PM-00	PRS-00	ACE-00	P-00	SP-00	SS-00
	TRSE-00	T-00	USIE-00	PMB-00	DRL-02	G-00	SAS-00
	/005W						

-----0D4449 021704Z /45

P 021314Z AUG 01

FM AMEMBASSY HARARE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9407

INFO NSC WASHDC PRIORITY

SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 03 HARARE 002322

SIPDIS

NSC FOR SENIOR AFRICA DIRECTOR JENDAYI FRAZER

LONDON FOR GURNEY

PARIS FOR BISA WILLIAMS

NAIROBI FOR PFLAUMER

E.O. 12958: DECL. 08/01/11

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [PINR](#) [MOPS](#) [ZI](#)

SUBJECT: OPPOSITION LEADER TSVANGIRAI ON UPCOMING PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

EASILY, THE CHARGE NOTED. WHAT HAS CHANGED THAT DYNAMIC? PRIMARILY THE DETERIORATION OF THE ECONOMY, TSVANGIRAI REPLIED,

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 HARARE 02322 02 OF 03 021704Z

WHICH HAS LED TO A RISING DISILLUSIONMENT WITH PRESIDENT MUGABE'S LEADERSHIP. THE YOUTH IN PARTICULAR ARE DISAFFECTED WITH MUGABE AND WILL NOT GIVE HIM ANOTHER CHANCE. THIS IS A HUGE PROBLEM FOR THE PRESIDENT, TSVANGIRAI POINTED OUT, BECAUSE SIXTY PERCENT OF ZIMBABWE'S POPULATION IS UNDER THE AGE OF 40.

17. (C) TSVANGIRAI DECLARED THAT ZANU-PF IS IN THE PROCESS OF DISINTEGRATING, AND THAT THAT PROCESS WOULD BE COMPLETE ONCE MUGABE GOES. MUGABE, HE SAID, HAS PREVENTED THE REFORMERS, THOSE CAPABLE OF DEVELOPING A NATIONAL FOLLOWING, FROM ADVANCING WITHIN THE PARTY. THERE ARE GOOD PEOPLE IN ZANU-PF, HE SAID, AND FINANCE MINISTER SIMBA MAKONI IS PROBABLY THE MOST QUALIFIED OF THEM. UNFORTUNATELY, TSVANGIRAI SAID, MAKONI HAD CHOSEN THE WRONG CAMP.

MUGABE'S FUTURE

18. (C) THE CHARGE ASKED WHETHER MUGABE IS PREPARED TO STEP DOWN UNDER CERTAIN CONDITIONS. THE ONE FACTOR WHICH GIVES MUGABE PAUSE, TSVANGIRAI SAID, IS THAT HE FEARS FOR HIS SECURITY SHOULD HE LEAVE OFFICE. ASKED WHETHER HE COULD BE OFFERED A GOLDEN PARACHUTE, TSVANGIRAI ASSERTED THAT THAT WOULD DEPEND ON WHO OFFERED IT, AS MUGABE HAS "ALWAYS MISTRUSTED EVERYONE." THE CHARGE ASKED WHETHER THE MDC WOULD MAKE SUCH AN OFFER. TSVANGIRAI STRESSED THAT HIS PARTY HAS MADE CLEAR IN A NUMBER OF PUBLIC STATEMENTS THAT IT IS NOT INTERESTED IN RETRIBUTION. WE ARE MORE INTERESTED, HE CONTINUED, IN REBUILDING THE COUNTRY THAN ON PUNISHING INDIVIDUALS. THE MDC, HE SAID, IS PREPARED TO LET MUGABE RETIRE AND LIVE IN PEACE, BUT THE ZIMBABWEAN PRESIDENT "DOESN'T BELIEVE US."

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 HARARE 02322 02 OF 03 021704Z

19. (C) TSVANGIRAI REMARKED THAT MUGABE WANTS TO ESTABLISH THE TERMS FOR HIS OWN SUCCESSION, BUT THE TIME FOR HIM TO DO SO UNILATERALLY IS LONG PAST. ASKED WHOM MUGABE WOULD PREFER AS HIS SUCCESSOR, TSVANGIRAI SAID WITHOUT HESITATION "IT'S OBVIOUS, EMMERSON MNANGAGWA [SPEAKER OF PARLIAMENT AND ZANU-PF SECRETARY FOR ADMINISTRATION]." HE DISMISSED MNANGAGWA'S ELECTORAL PROSPECTS, HOWEVER, INSISTING THAT HE HAS NO POLITICAL FUTURE IN ZIMBABWE -- ONCE MUGABE GOES -- AND WOULD LOSE SOUNDLY TO THE MDC PRESIDENT IN A PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION. (COMMENT: MNANGAGWA LOST HIS RUN FOR PARLIAMENT IN THE JUNE 2000 ELECTIONS, AS DID TSVANGIRAI, ALTHOUGH TSVANGIRAI SUBSEQUENTLY WON A HIGH COURT CASE

SIPDIS

OVERTURNING ZANU-PF'S VICTORY IN HIS CONSTITUENCY.) TSVANGIRAI EXPRESSED HIS BELIEF THAT MUGABE CANNOT AFFORD NOT TO HOLD THE ELECTION, WHICH THE PRESIDENT SEES AS NECESSARY FOR HIS OWN EXTERNAL LEGITIMACY.

10. (C) ASKED WHETHER THE RECENT LAW BANNING FOREIGN FUNDING OF POLITICAL PARTIES HAD PROVED TO BE A SIGNIFICANT HINDRANCE FOR THE MDC, TSVANGIRAI SAID NO, THE LAW HAD BEEN MORE OF AN INCONVENIENCE. HE POINTED OUT THAT ZANU-PF IS ALSO RECEIVING FUNDS FROM FOREIGN SOURCES.

GETTING ALONG WITH YOUR NEIGHBORS

11. (C) NOTING THAT TSVANGIRAI AND OTHER SENIOR MDC OFFICIALS HAVE HAD REGULAR CONTACTS WITH THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT AND THE CONGRESS OF SOUTH AFRICAN TRADE UNIONS (COSATU), THE CHARGE ASKED HOW THE NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES SAW THE SITUATION IN ZIMBABWE. THE GOVERNMENTS OF BOTSWANA, MOZAMBIQUE, AND SOUTH AFRICA, TSVANGIRAI REPLIED, ARE SYMPATHETIC WITH THE MDC'S POSITION, WHILE

SIPDIS

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 HARARE 02322 02 OF 03 021704Z

ZAMBIAN PRESIDENT CHILUBA PREFERS TO SIDE WITH MUGABE GIVEN HIS INTEREST IN PURSUING A THIRD TERM. SOUTH AFRICA, HE CONTINUED, CAN AFFORD TO SPEAK OUT PUBLICLY ON DEVELOPMENTS IN ZIMBABWE, BUT IT IS TRYING TO FIND AN EFFECTIVE BALANCE BETWEEN ENGAGING MUGABE AND ISOLATING HIM.

ROLE OF THE UNITED STATES?

12. (C) THE CHARGE ASKED HOW THE UNITED STATES COULD BEST HELP IN INCREASING THE PROSPECTS FOR A FREE AND FAIR ELECTION AND BUILDING DEMOCRATIC PROCESSES AND INSTITUTIONS IN ZIMBABWE. TSVANGIRAI URGED THE UNITED STATES TO REMAIN ENGAGED AND TO CONTINUE TO CONDEMN "UNDEMOCRATIC PRACTICES." THE REMARKS BY SECRETARY POWELL DURING HIS TRIP TO SOUTH AFRICA HAD BEEN VERY HELPFUL IN POSITIONING THE UNITED STATES ON THE SIDE OF THOSE HERE WHO ARE PRESSING FOR DEMOCRATIC CHANGE. HE ALSO ENCOURAGED THE U.S. TO WORK CLOSELY WITH KEY AFRICAN LEADERS AND OTHER PARTNERS, SUCH AS THE EU, TO ENSURE, TO THE EXTENT POSSIBLE, THAT THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY SPEAKS WITH ONE VOICE ON ZIMBABWE. HE ALSO ASKED FOR TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO THE ELECTORAL PROCESS, SUCH AS CLEANING UP THE VOTERS ROLL, AND THAT THE UNITED STATES SEND ELECTION OBSERVERS.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL PTQ6718

PAGE 01 HARARE 02322 03 OF 03 021705Z

ACTION AF-00

INFO LOG-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 SRPP-00 EUR-00 VC-00 H-01
TEDE-00 INR-00 L-00 AC-01 NSAE-00 NSCE-00 OMB-01
PA-00 PM-00 PRS-00 ACE-00 P-00 SP-00 SS-00
TRSE-00 T-00 USIE-00 PMB-00 DRL-02 G-00 SAS-00
/005W

-----0D4454 021705Z /45

P 021314Z AUG 01
FM AMEMBASSY HARARE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9408
INFO NSC WASHDC PRIORITY
SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 03 OF 03 HARARE 002322

SIPDIS

NSC FOR SENIOR AFRICA DIRECTOR JENDAYI FRAZER
LONDON FOR GURNEY
PARIS FOR BISA WILLIAMS
NAIROBI FOR PFLAUMER

E.O. 12958: DECL. 08/01/11
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [PINR](#) [MOPS](#) [ZI](#)
SUBJECT: OPPOSITION LEADER TSVANGIRAI ON UPCOMING PRESIDENTIAL
ELECTION

[13.](#) (C) THE CHARGE INFORMED TSVANGIRAI THAT THE UNITED STATES IS
CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 HARARE 02322 03 OF 03 021705Z
PLANNING TO PROVIDE INTERNATIONAL OBSERVERS BEFORE AND DURING THE
ELECTION. TSVANGIRAI WAS PLEASED WITH THAT NEWS AND STRESSED THE
IMPORTANCE OF HAVING RESPECTED INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS PROVIDE
REGULAR ASSESSMENTS BEGINNING WELL IN ADVANCE OF THE VOTING DAYS.
ASKED WHETHER THERE HAD BEEN MUCH SUBSTANTIVE DIFFERENCE IN THE
REPORTS ISSUED BY EUROPEAN AND U.S. OBSERVERS LAST JUNE AND THOSE
PUBLISHED BY SADC OBSERVERS, TSVANGIRAI DISMISSED THE SADC REPORTS
AS TOO SOFT ON MUGABE. HE REPORTED THAT ANC CHIEF WHIP TONY
YENGONI HAD TOLD HIM RECENTLY THAT HE NOW REALIZES SADC'S
ASSESSMENT OF THE JUNE 2000 ELECTION WAS INACCURATE.

ROLE OF THE MILITARY

[14.](#) (C) ASKED WHETHER MUGABE WOULD ALLOW THE MDC TO ASSUME POWER
IF IT WINS THE ELECTION, TSVANGIRAI SAID HE WOULD HAVE LITTLE
CHOICE, AS HE CANNOT RELY ON THE SECURITY SERVICES TO PROP HIM UP.
THE MDC PRESIDENT SAID HE IS CONFIDENT -- BASED ON EXTENSIVE
CONSULTATIONS WITH THE MILITARY -- THAT THE ARMED FORCES WILL NOT
INTERVENE TO KEEP MUGABE IN POWER SHOULD THE MDC WIN THE
PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION. HE THOUGHT THAT SOME UNITS, SUCH AS THE
PRESIDENTIAL GUARD, MIGHT TRY TO DO SO, BUT THAT THE VAST MAJORITY
OF ARMED FORCES MEMBERS WOULD ABIDE BY THE RESULTS OF THE
ELECTION. IN ADDITION, THERE ARE ONLY ABOUT 1,000 ROGUE WAR
VETERANS ON WHOM MUGABE CAN DEPEND FOR SUPPORT.

LAND

[15.](#) (C) THE CHARGE ASKED TSVANGIRAI TO DESCRIBE THE MDC'S POLICY
ON LAND. IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO IMPLEMENT FAST-TRACK RESETTLEMENT
CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 HARARE 02322 03 OF 03 021705Z
ANYWHERE IN THE WORLD, TSVANGIRAI CONTENDED. IMPLEMENTATION OF A
GENUINE LAND REFORM PROGRAM REQUIRES A PLAN AND RESOURCES, NEITHER
OF WHICH FEATURES IN THE GOZ'S CURRENT CHAOTIC EFFORT. AN
ESSENTIAL STARTING POINT, HE DECLARED, IS FOR THE NATIONAL
LEADERSHIP TO RECOGNIZE BOTH THAT COMMERCIAL AGRICULTURE IS VITAL
TO THE COUNTRY'S WELL-BEING AND THAT SOCIAL EQUITY IS IMPORTANT.
IN ADDITION, FARMWORKERS ARE A CRUCIAL PART OF THE LABOR FORCE AND
MUST BE INCLUDED IN ANY SOLUTION TO THE LAND PROBLEM. MANY OF
THEM ARE THIRD- OR FOURTH-GENERATION ZIMBABWEANS AND TREATING THEM
AS FOREIGNERS IS UNFAIR.

MDC ON DRC

[16.](#) (C) ASKED FOR HIS VIEWS ON THE DRC CONFLICT, TSVANGIRAI SAID
IT CANNOT BE RESOLVED MILITARILY, BUT WHETHER A POLITICAL SOLUTION
COULD BE ACHIEVED DEPENDS ON THE EXTENT TO WHICH PRESIDENT KABILA
ENGAGES HIS COMPATRIOTS. ZIMBABWE, HE CONTINUED, HAS NO NATIONAL
SECURITY INTERESTS AT STAKE IN THE DRC. IF HE WINS THE
PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION, HE WOULD ORDER THE WITHDRAWAL OF ZIMBABWEAN
TROOPS. HE ADDED THAT THIS WOULD TAKE PLACE WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK
OF THE LUSAKA PROCESS, IN A FASHION THAT WOULD NOT DESTABILIZE THE
SITUATION IN THE DRC.

COMMENT

[17.](#) (C) ALTHOUGH SOME OBSERVERS HAVE EXPRESSED DOUBTS ABOUT
TSVANGIRAI'S EDUCATIONAL PREPARATION FOR THE PRESIDENCY (HIS

SIPDIS

ACADEMIC STUDIES DID NOT EXTEND BEYOND HIGH SCHOOL), HE IS
BRIGHT, ARTICULATE, THOUGHTFUL, AND WELL-INFORMED, AND WAS
CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 HARARE 02322 03 OF 03 021705Z
COMFORTABLE DISCUSSING A RANGE OF DIFFICULT ISSUES. HE WAS
CONFIDENT BUT NOT ARROGANT AND SEEMED GENUINELY OPTIMISTIC ABOUT
HIS PRESIDENTIAL RACE PROSPECTS.

18. (C) TSVANGIRAI'S EFFORTS TO CULTIVATE THE MILITARY LEADERSHIP
ARE SMART POLITICS AND COULD PAY IMPORTANT DIVIDENDS DURING THE
ELECTION AND ITS AFTERMATH. HE MAY BE OVERLY OPTIMISTIC ABOUT THE
NEUTRALITY OF THE MILITARY, HOWEVER. WE WERE IMPRESSED BY
TSVANGIRAI'S FOCUS ON THE FUTURE RATHER THAN ON MUGABE'S

SIPDIS

SHORTCOMINGS, AND ARE ENCOURAGED THAT HE IS PREPARED TO LET THE
ZIMBABWEAN PRESIDENT RETIRE IN PEACE WITHOUT SEEKING RETRIBUTION.
IT IS IMPORTANT TO NOTE THAT TSVANGIRAI IS A SHREWD POLITICIAN,
KEENLY AWARE OF THE NEED TO CULTIVATE THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY,
AND HIS COMMENTS MUST BE SEEN IN THAT LIGHT.

HOOKS

CONFIDENTIAL

>